

## Findon's unique geomorphological landscape

The steep escarpment of the South Downs is an iconic part of the National Park's landscape. Locally this is breached by the Arun and Adur rivers creating a well-defined block of downland between two major rivers with steep sided valleys.

Less apparent than the iconic primary escarpment is a secondary escarpment which is most pronounced in the Findon area. where the escarpment can be traced by joining the summits of Cissbury Hill, Church Hill, Blackpatch Hill and Barpham Hill. (see map below) These hills owe their origin to the dissection of the secondary escarpment by long-disappeared rivers which have left dry valleys between the hills. The most significant of these is the Findon Dry Valley.



The secondary escarpment has a steep slope facing roughly northwards and a gentler dip slope tailing off to the south. Findon sits in its dry valley midway between the very summits of Cissbury and Church Hills. The Findon Dry Valley has a gentler southwards gradient than the dip slope of the escarpment; thus the dry valley sides to the east and west of Findon are the steepest in the area. This has the effect of hemming the village in eastwards and westwards. To a degree this hides the village from some downland aspects but from the popular vantage points of Cissbury and Church Hill, Findon is all too apparent! This is recognised on the Context Analysis map below provided by SDNPA which depicts a swathe of landscape-sensitive land abutting the Built Up Area Boundary of the village to the west and to a lesser extent to the east of the village. Moreover Church and Cissbury Hills themselves preserve a very strong cultural heritage in flint mining by early man and Cissbury Ring, an Iron Age fort crowning Cissbury Hill, is described by its owners the National Trust as “the most historic hill in the South Downs” and has a long history of attracting visitors.

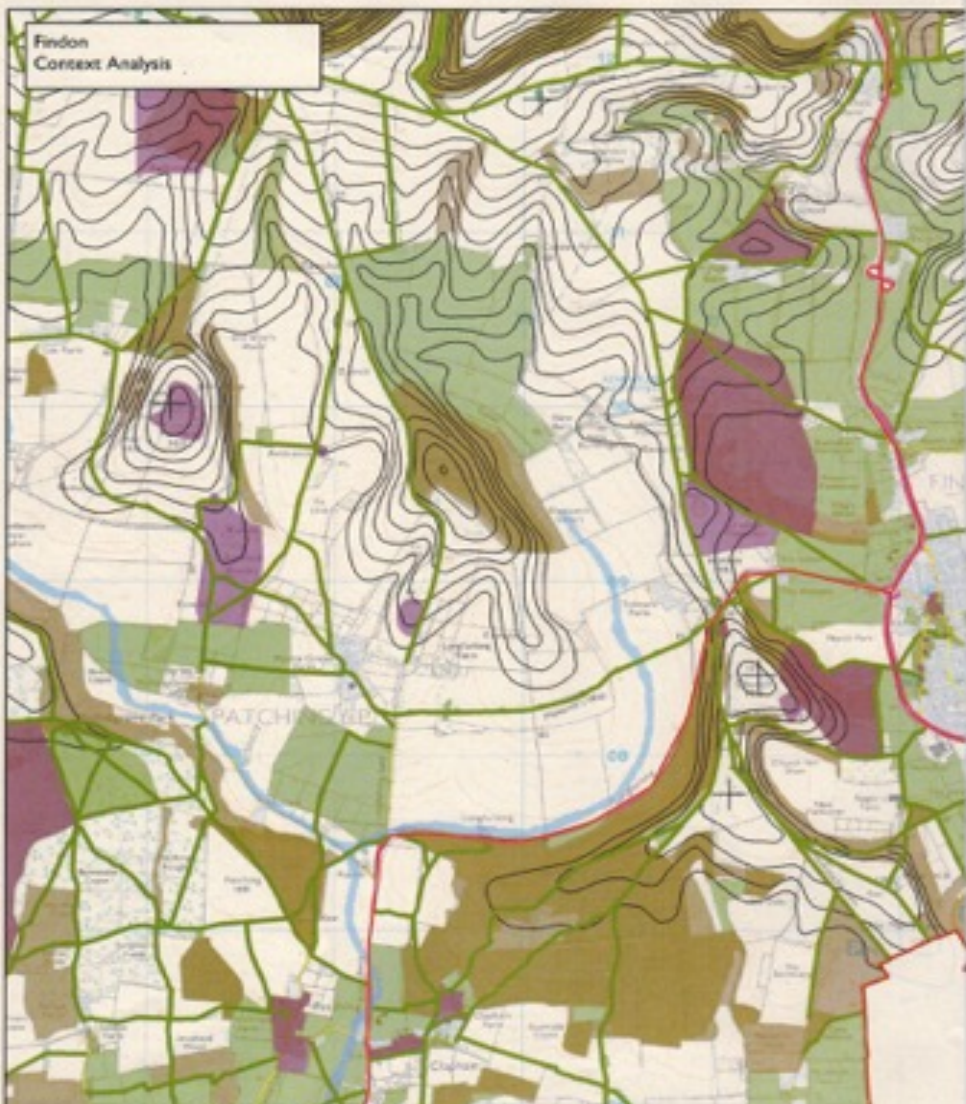
It is worth reflecting here that Findon is *the* major downland village in the Arun to Adur block and it has unique in its position as the only settlement in a breach in the secondary escarpment. Thus the village itself has considerable landscape merit which the Findon LNP seeks to conserve and enhance along with the rich cultural heritage on its doorstep. These are essential ingredients in creating a Findon story for promoting sustainable tourism in its role as a gateway to the National Park

To the south of the village the SDNP boundary sharply defines the suburban contact with Worthing. A narrow tract of land with high landscape sensitivity separates Findon from the Park boundary. The Findon LNP seeks to conserve and enhance this tract to maintain Findon’s landscape distinctiveness and merit the title of a gateway to the Park .

The context analysis map shows land to the north-east of the village as having a lower landscape sensitivity but with a high concentration of green corridors Here the slopes around the village are gentler and the Built Up Boundary has crept up to its highest point. Topographically this area is overlooked from the Cissbury and Church Hills and this should weigh significantly in any measures to enhance and conserve Findon.

Finally to the north of the village the Dry Valley floor’s landscape sensitivity is lessened by the A24 trunk road. From a unique landscape perspective this area may be the least vulnerable of Findon’s four quarters but the LNP will guard against promoting a ribbon of development along the A24 into what is one of the narrowest North-South transects of the Park.

Findon  
Context Analysis



Scale @ A3 25,000  
Source: Natural England, English Heritage, Ordnance Survey  
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	Biodiversity sensitivity		Main road		High ground (over 100m)
	Cultural Heritage sensitivity		Railway		Intrusion
	Landscape sensitivity		Cycle route		Urban area
	Green Corridor		Planned cycle route		South Downs National Park boundary
	River and stream corridor				